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News Release – Hot off the Press!

In the past month, a new acronym has come into being on Hornby Island. Please welcome HHN! Now we know that a new acronym isn’t necessarily exciting news, but in this case, it actually is. HHN stands for the Hornby Housing Network. It turns out that a whole bucket full of well known Hornby and Hornby related acronyms (think HIRRA, IT, APC, HICEEC, HIHS, HISTRA, CVRD\* and beyond) have one burning concern in common: the issue of **Affordable Housing**. People involved in all these groups have joined forces in the new Hornby Housing Network. We are working together not as representatives but as interested individuals with ideas and information to share and a willingness to listen.

Affordable housing on Hornby, or lack of it, affects everyone on the island, whether you know it or not. Do you shop at the Co-op or Ford’s Cove, go to the library, go to the Depot, have children or grandchildren in the pre-school or school, need your home cleaned or repaired, lawn mowed, firewood supplied, glad to have First Responders or a Fire Department, enjoy Hornby grown vegetables or flowers, go to the Farmers Market, eat at island restaurants, buy island art, dance at the Community Hall, and listen to island musicians? Well, the folks that keep all that going are folks who need a home that they can afford to buy or rent. Sorry, no one is going to commute two brutal ferries to supply all our needs. And we are a tiny island that has a huge public profile now and pent up demand for summer homes. What to do?

That is the question that the Hornby Housing Network has come together to explore. Each group had been working independently, but coming together to trade ideas and information has been amazingly energizing. We have committed to identifying and trying to address housing gaps for all demographics. It is too soon to predict which initiatives will result, and which groups will be involved in moving those initiatives forward. No one solution will work for everyone who needs secure housing. This much we know. There will be multiple answers required. Are you single, a couple, a family, or a senior? Would you like a new energy efficient apartment style dwelling, a shared or co-op type home, or do you prefer to own your home and need room to have a garden and ducks? Where will land come from, and how can it be purchased at today’s prices? Will new zoning regulations be needed? All of these are important questions.

The Network is a loose affiliation dedicated to evaluating, planning, and implementing actions to address just these kinds of housing issues on Hornby Island. It has an open membership, so if any other group or individual would be interested in taking part in these discussions, please let April Lewis know at hornbyislandhousing@gmail.com. And thanks to everyone who got this far, for your time and attention!

B. Baird for HHN

\*Hornby Island Acronym Guide: HIRRA - Hornby Island Residents and Ratepayers Association, IT – Islands Trust, APC – Advisory Planning Commission (under Islands Trust), HICEEC – Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation , HIHS – Hornby Island Housing Society, HISTRA – Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association, CVRD – Comox Valley Regional District (Area A)